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HOUSE RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives are pleased to congratulate University of Illinois wrestling coach Mark Johnson on his retirement; and

WHEREAS, Mark Johnson, the top wrestling coach in Illinois history, announced his retirement Monday, March 30, 2009; and

WHEREAS, During his 17-year career, Coach Johnson led the Illini to more wins and produced more NCAA champions, NCAA qualifiers, and All-Americans than any coach in school history; his teams were 203-44-3 in dual meets; and the team is coming off an eighth-place finish at the recent NCAA meet, the 10th time his team finished in the Top 10; and

WHEREAS, Mark Johnson was a two-time NCAA runner-up at Michigan and earned a spot on the 1980 United States Olympic team, but did not get to compete in the Moscow Games because of the United States boycott; and

WHEREAS, Shortly after the Olympics, he went to work as an Iowa assistant for legendary Dan Gable; during his time in Iowa City, the Hawkeyes won four national championships; his first head coaching job was at Oregon State, where he earned Pac-10 coach of the year honors in 1992 after leading the Beavers to

1 the conference title; and

2 WHEREAS, The Rock Island native took over at Illinois in  
3 1992 and quickly started to rebuild the program; during his  
4 tenure, he coached seven wrestlers, Steve Marianetti, Ernest  
5 Benion Jr., Eric Siebert, Carl Perry, John Lockhart, Adam  
6 Tirapelle, and Matt Lackey to NCAA titles; ten other Illini  
7 reached the NCAA finals, including two-time runner-up Mike  
8 Poeta, who, like his coach, intends to pursue a spot on the  
9 United States Olympic team; and

10 WHEREAS, In 2005, Coach Johnson's Illini ended a 53-year  
11 drought by winning the Big Ten title, and he earned his second  
12 Big Ten coach of the year honor that season; therefore, be it

13 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
14 NINETY-SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
15 congratulate Coach Mark Johnson on his success at the  
16 University of Illinois and wish him all the best in his future  
17 endeavors; and be it further

18 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
19 presented to Mark Johnson as a symbol of our respect and  
20 esteem.